

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8164

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRETORIA 3632

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT WA

SUBJ: TURNHALLE ANNOUNCED PROPOSALS FOR ELECTIONS

1. DIRK MUDGE, CHAIRMAN OF THE CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE OF THE TURNHALLE, AT A PRESS CONFERENCE ON JULY 22 REVEALED THE GROUP'S PROPOSALS FOR ELECTIONS TO A CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. THE TURNHALLE PROPOSAL WHICH MUDGE SAID WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO THE ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL "WHEN HE TAKES OFFICE IN THE TERRITORY, POSSIBLY NEXT MONTH" CALLED FOR

- A NON-ETHNIC ONE-MAN, ONE-VOTE POLL
- PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION FOR POLITICAL PARTIES ON A COUNTRY-WIDE BASIS IN THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY
- NAMES OF CANDIDATES TO BE MADE PUBLIC BEFORE THE ELECTION BUT NAMES OF POLITICAL PARTIES OR COALITIONS NOT INDIVIDUALS TO APPEAR ON THE BALLOT
- A PREDETERMINED PERCENTAGE OF THE VOTE "PERHAPS

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5 PERCENT" TO BE NECESSARY BEFORE A PARTY COULD BECOME ELIGIBLE FOR REPRESENTATION IN THE ASSEMBLY.

2. MUDGE STRESSED THAT THE FINAL DECISION ON THE ELECTIONS LAY WITH THE ADMINISTRATOR-GENERAL "WHO WOULD BE IN CONSULTATION WITH THE UN REPRESENTATIVE, IF ONE WAS APPOINTED."

3. COMMENT. THE SAG APPARENTLY DIRECTED THE TURNHALLE DECISION TO PROPOSE A NON-ETHNIC VOTE. TURNHALLE SOURCES TOLD US THAT FORMIN BOTHA IN HIS BRIEFING OF THE TURNHALLE ON JULY 13 EMPHASIZED THAT POLLING FOR THE CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY SHOULD NOT REPEAT NOT BE ON AN ETHNIC BASIS.

4. PROPORTIONAL VOTING ON A COUNTRY-WIDE BASIS FOR PARTIES RATHER THAN INDIVIDUALS WOULD POSSIBLY BENEFIT THE PRO-SAG GROUP AS THE TURNHALLE NAME IS BETTER AND PERHAPS MORE FAVORABLY KNOWN THAN ITS INDIVIDUAL LEADERS. ON THE OTHER HAND, SUCH A VOTE MIGHT BE MORE TO THE ADVANTAGE OF SWAPO WHOSE VOTERS ARE HEAVILY CONCENTRATED IN OVAMBO, WHICH CONTAINS ABOUT HALF THE POPULATION. IN A VOTE BY DISTRICT SWAPO MIGHT WIN ALL OF OVAMBO'S DELEGATES BUT NONE ELSEWHERE AND THUS POSSIBLY END UP WITH A POPULAR MAJORITY BUT LESS THAN HALF OF THE DELEGATES.

5. ALL IN ALL, THE TURNHALLE'S ENVISIONED ELECTION MECHANICS, AS DESCRIBED BY MUDGE, APPEAR LIBERAL AND REASONABLE. SOUTH AFRICA WILL PROBABLY POINT TO THIS PROPOSAL AS ANOTHER CONCESSION FROM ITS SIDE. ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE TURNHALLE ELECTION PACKAGE AT THIS TIME ALSO REFLECTS CONTINUED PREPARATION FOR A UNILATERAL INTERNAL SOLUTION IN NAMIBIA IF THE
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WESTERN INITIATIVE DOES NOT BEAR FRUIT.

6. A DETAILED REPORT ON POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN NAMIBIA FOLLOWS.
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
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